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FEAR OF DEATH IN RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

The article deals with the analysis of human comprehension of death problem in religion and philosophy. The author reviews variants of fear of death overcoming such as eschatological concepts both religious and non-religious as well as immortology as a particular brunch of science that grows out of religious and philosophical traditions. Such forms of eschatological outlook of a modern person as eschatophobia and eschatomania phenomena are analyzed.

Keywords: death, fear of death, eschatology, eschatophobia, eschatomania, immortology.

ФИЛОСОФИЯЛЫҚ ОЙ МЕН ДІНДЕГІ ҚОРҚЫНЫШ ӨЛІМІ

Мақалада философиялық ой мен діндегі қорқыныш өлімінің адам мәселесінің сараптамалық санасы қарастырылған. Автор діни-философиялық дәстүрлерді өсетінін жүзеге асыру үшін ғылыми білімнің саласы ретінде діни және діни емес үлгідегі, сонымен қатар иммортология ұғымдар түрінде, сондай-ақ қорқыныш өлімнің нұсқаларын тексереді. Эсхатофобия мен эсхатомания сияқты қазіргі адамның көзқарасы эсхатологиялық үлгіде сарапталады.

Түйін сөздер: өлім, өлімнен қорқу, эсхатология, эсхатофобия, эсхатомания, иммортология.

СТРАХ СМЕРТИ В РЕЛИГИИ И ФИЛОСОФСКОЙ МЫСЛИ

В статье рассматривается анализ осознания человеком проблемы смерти в религиозной традиции и философской мысли. Автор рассматривает варианты преодоления страха смерти в виде формирования эсхатологических концепций религиозного и нерелигиозного образца, а также иммортологии как сферы научного знания, которая вырастает из религиозно-философской традиции. Анализируются такие формы эсхатологических воззрений современного человека, как эсхатофобия и эсхатомания.

Ключевые слова: смерть, страх смерти, эсхатология, эсхатофобия, эсхатомания, иммортология.

History of philosophical thought deals with problem of death as one of the core point amongst other ontological issues such as sense of life, life and death, good and evil existence etc since being of human became a problem for philosophy. It is proved by psychologists that our understanding of our being mortal is a factor which influences a person's identity formation. It follows that this very comprehension of our existence end influences a human consciousness formation. On the other hand the same understanding is considered to be the most psychologically traumatic experience for a person's consciousness. This factor makes the problem in question a point of great interest in multiple psychological research works.

Understanding of human being mortal causes fear of death and is accompanied by it as a rule. But still fear of death problem remains not researched enough in psychology. In psychological tradition problem of death is researched in practical Psychology as one of practical problems mostly. So fear of death still hasn't got comprehensive theoretical background by now.

Religion and philosophy are the spheres of knowledge in which a problem of death has always been one of the most important. Being also types of human outlook religion and Philosophy deal with ontological problems that people face and are deeply interested in: human understanding of our own existence leads to its' ending comprehension. Existence always finally ends. That is what comes to a person's mind together with his consciousness development.

Multiple approaches to the problem research brought to life at least two particular brunches of knowledge: thanatology and eschatology. Thanatology is a brunch of medicine which studies state of a living organism before death and bodily changes which accompany death. At the beginning of the XX century thanatology was divided into general and particular. In the universal meaning thanatology is regarded to be a science about death in general.

Eschatology is a study of final events of history and final destiny of a mankind. It appeared within religion as a system of ideas about end of the world, human redemption and life in hereafter after their physical death. Eschatological ideas got so popular so that they formed particular part of theology – eschatology and nowadays went far

beyond religion.

A human is the only creature in the world for which his existence is a problem. The phenomenon a person is mostly interested in is a person himself, his life and everything connected with it. One of the reasons why eschatology became so widely spread is human interest in the problem of death as it touches upon human existence.

Nowadays eschatology is a part of theology as well as philosophy. Every religion that has study about end of the world in its doctrine forms its own eschatological system. Today we observe Christian, Muslim, Buddhist eschatology, eschatology of Judaism etc.

There also appeared multiple scientific forecasts based on eschatological idea. They started so called «scientific» eschatology formation. To scientific representatives of eschatological outlook we may include members of the Roman Club for instance. Among one of the most popular eschatological scenarios is global pandemic a mankind couldn't resist. Technological progress brought up threat of loss of control over nanotechnologies in a result of which all the planet will be consumed with grey mucus. Artificial intellect and its development up to being out of human control don't seem fantastic anymore. Such threats of eschatological character are technogenic – caused by people.

But there still remain threats not depending on people. Among them we can name another change of the magnetic poles that could also have dramatic results for people. Eruption and earthquake of global character are named as possible ways of destroying life on the Earth.

There are also threats from space. Asteroid danger has always been expected as a catastrophe from the space. Appearance of the Supernova near the Earth close enough to destroy it considers rather possible. The Earth can be also destroyed by the flash of gamma radiation when falling under the jet.

In the furthest perspective we have unavoidable global eschatological catastrophe caused by the Sun transformation into red giant when it comes into the Earth's orbit and makes life on it impossible.

Scientific approach to eschatological ideas and possible access to the information in contemporary world arise speculations upon the problem of the world end. They in turn cause alarming expectations which are revealed as attempts to count out the date of the end of the world for instance and actualize fear of death in modern society.

In primal culture death was considered to be a result of presence of «spirit» in a human body which leaves it time to time (while person is sleeping) or forever (when person dies). Psychism was a typical form of belief that was based on conviction in spirit as transcendental essence which leaves body and continues its existence when a human dies. Later on it caused a variety of ideas such as rebirth, existence of the soul after death and as a result they were reflected in ideas of hereafter, world of the dead, paradise and hell, Kingdom of heaven etc.

The famous British anthropologist of Polish origin B. Malinowski in his research work «Magic, Science and Religion» [1] supposes that for primitive beliefs death was an integral part of lifecycle: birth, adolescence, marriage and death [1, p. 24].

Similar to processes in the world of nature, death was accepted as the first «step to resurrection, decay – revival stage, autumn maturity and winter fading – prelude to spring awakening [1, p. 24]. We can say that knowledge of the processes in the natural world answered important ontological questions such as life death and at the same time contributed to primitive beliefs development.

Any fear is a reflection of fear of death, and death, nothing is the basis of it [2, p. 6]. Fear is considered to be one of the roots of religion as for a primitive the unknown – the whole world which they tried to understand and explain was fearful and that caused personification – transferring humane mental properties in the nature. As a result nature was worshiped. In this case fear of death can be the other side of self-preservation.

Cyclic perception of time based on cycling, reproducibility, and repeatability of natural processes is characteristic of mythical outlook. Death was also explained as a part of that cycling process.

Transition to agriculture as a productive activity was connected with human active participation in a process of harvest reproduction out of gathered seeds after its maturation – natural cycle of plant existence complication. A new plant growing out of seed – transfer to «resurrection» of the same living organism after the «death» caused the idea of possible human resurrection perhaps in «the other world».

The ideas of death and resurrection are also connected with initiation rites accompanied by different trials and damages – from the easiest such as cuts on the body to rather perceptible, circumcision for instance [1, p. 40]. Symbolic meaning of initiation rites is bound with its subject's comprehension of his dying in previous status and birth in a new one, «death» of previous life conditions and transferring to new one, more adequate.

Human consciousness is a precondition to ontological problems comprehension. First of all they concern sense of life, aim of life, life and death. Understanding of our being alive means understanding ending of life. Fear of death a priori bears the mark of inevitability and fatality as biological death is a logical ending of any biological process. It is impossible to avoid death as well as to reduce its probability to absolute zero.

Nowadays extreme and often irrational fear of death is also called thanatophobia. It may reveal itself in such forms of fear as fear to be buried alive, fear of cremation, of dying and of the unknown afterwards. These phenomena are being researched in practical Psychology as it has been said above and need theoretical background.

Religion may be considered one of the most researched and well-grounded response to problem of death challenge. In religious doctrine death is the boundary that separates the real world, earthly, visible and sensible – «this» from «that» – unseen, otherworldly and transcendental world. So physical death – an individual eschatologi-

cal act is only a transfer to other real existence.

Perception of death as an inevitable fate of all living contributes to eschatological concepts formation. Though eschatology is formed in religious doctrine nowadays ideas of world collapse are widely spread far beyond theology.

Individual eschatology is an important part of any religion as one of the main tasks of religion is to explain people their place in the world – both earthly and transcendental, to establish rules according to which a person deserves a certain part in eternity by the way they live their lives.

Religion compensates fear of death by hope for a better life in transcendental world. But inevitability of death provokes attempts of its denial, fear of harbingers of death such as oldness. Fear of oldness is very widely spread in contemporary global world with its cult of youth and beauty supported by means of latest innovations in cosmetology, plastic and esthetic surgery [3, p. 86]. Every year we observe an increasing number of people applying to them to stay young and that suggests strengthening the fear of death.

Religion offers people one more compensation mechanism which is God's protection. The one who believes in God is dependent on Him and protected by Him.

Religious and philosophic tradition formed theodicy – a study of vindication of God. God punishes people by death for their falling from grace but at the same time protects them. This concept was criticized by existentialists as they suggested that a person is abandoned in the world, alone and lonely.

Nowadays Christian theodicy is connected with eschatology: God destroyed the world in the past by Great Flood to clear it of sin and will destroy the world once more to destroy sin finally and forever. But people who stick to «rules of life» offered by God will get «a better place»: «In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also» (John 14:2-3) [4, p. 132]. So the most tragic event in a human history will end in people's coming into a «better world». That means that God is graceful to people and their future after the doomsday.

Fear of death has a universal character. Antique philosophical tradition deals with problem of death within ontology. Epicurus touches upon fear of death saying that there's no need to be afraid of death as «when we live – there is no death, when death comes – we are no longer alive», so «death does not exist either for alive or dead, as for the one it does not exist and the other do not exist for it» [5].

Plato presents problem of death in a new light by offering study of two worlds: world of ideas and world of things. For him problem of death is one of the most important to think of. In his work «Phaedo» he calls death and dying process the only real topics worth philosophers' reflection. Spirit is able to reach the truth when body does not interfere with it [6, p. 161-163]. Analysis of Plato's ideas gives N. Berdyaev

reasons to affirm that for Plato a philosopher's life is nothing but «death exercising» [7, p. 174].

N. Berdyaev outlines two eschatological perspectives: personal and universal historical. He emphasizes that people created «cruel» eschatology, which bases on hell concept, «revenging» eschatology. A concept of «eternal hell» indicates that Christian consciousness does not dissociated itself from «primal fear» [7, p. 277-278].

Its final complication fear of death gets in a concept of eschatophobia – fear of final ending of not only own life but also earth collapse. Eschatophobia could be brought to life by promoting eschatological ideas. The worst thing about such sermon is trying to set the date of that event. This may lead not only to schatophobia but also to atheism [8, p. 21]. Eschatophobia may be treated as human reaction to eschatological sermon, the identification of any event in the past and present of the eschatological prophecies of the Bible [8, p. 26]. In such context eschatophobia is an attempt to avoid emotions associated with thoughts of their own mortality [9]. Among characteristic features of eschatophobia avoidance of permanent reminding of eschatological motifs in everyday life, trying to live as if life is eternal are the most typical.

Nowadays there is a tendency to escapism that reveals itself in «hiding death», «amnesia» about the death, displacement thoughts of death [9]. In the most general meaning eschatophobia could also be regarded as one of the ways to overcome fear of death.

Eschatomania which appeared under eschatological idea influence is an outlook based on excessive preoccupation with eschatological ideas when everything happening in individual and social being is evaluated within eschatological goal. In the context of eschatomania all the biblical history as well as Christian doctrine are identified with eschatology [8, p. 17-27]. Extreme preoccupation with eschatology, seeing it in everything that happens which is considered to be temporary are main characteristics of eschatomania.

There is also tendency to identify theology with eschatology as many outstanding theologians such as K. Bart, F. Stugg are sure that the New Testament is extremely eschatological. To prove that idea they use textual analysis according to which only in Philemon and 3 John hope concerning future and last events is not mentioned [8, p. 21]. That is the approach to eschatology comprehension that got the name of eschatomania.

There is also ethical meaning in eschatological idea and it proves that eschatology is based not only on fear and negative intentions, its aim is not only frightening people with terrifying events in the end of the world. A system of eschatological doctrine «purposes» was developed within theological tradition [8, p. 22] : 1) giving joy in sorrow : «For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory» (2 Corinthians 4 :17); 2) encouraging to purifying and having holy life: «And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth

himself, even as he is pure» (1 John 3 :3); 3) to be useful for education righteousness: «All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness» (2 Timothy 3 :16); 4) telling us about life after death: «We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord» (2 Corinthians 5 :8); 5) telling us about end of history; 6) testifying biblical prophesies execution; 7) encouraging people to communicate with God, praise Him and get His blessing.

In his research work «Eschatology: Future of the Created in God» [8, p. 21] German theologian A. Zigenaus emphasizes leading role of eschatology for the whole theology as theology is based on eschatological idea mainly. For A. Zigenaus eschatology is a study about «absolute future». Taking it into consideration the ethical sense of eschatology provides «final evaluation sense of life» and «saving God's actions» aimed at saving people.

As one of the most important philosophic problem death and comprehension of our being mortal are treated in existentialism. Fear of death is a core theme in M. Heidegger's work «Being and Time». For M. Heidegger in the most general sense death is a «life phenomenon» [10, p. 246]. A person faces death as the other's death and our own death is comprehended by means of death of the other [10, p. 238]. So comprehension of the other's death is available to person only in form of empathy, only «objectively» on the opposite to impossibility to cognize our personal death – «subjective». Nevertheless death of the other encourages people to think over their own death [10, p. 237]. Metaphysics of death in existentialism is a «negative» being approval: comprehension of unavoidability of death helps to understand life, its value and uniqueness, define the purpose of life and fill it with sense.

For M. Heidegger death is not the end of life but rather the way of a mortal creature's being. Such an approach to the problem in question is also characteristic of Abrahamic religions, Christianity mainly. A person's experience of «presence of his death» can help avoiding fear of death and give integrity to his being [9, p. 200].

Fear of death is also applicable to be a strong regulation means of social relationships, particularly to approve social structure or authority. History keeps in a mankind's memory such support mechanisms of social regulation as human sacrifice in early civilizations, death sentence executions, murder during the war, death in natural disasters, capital punishment etc. Some of them are still being practiced in some countries and that also invests into keeping up fear of death. That concerns mainly the death penalty and euthanasia. These two phenomena cause multiple discussions as they have supporters and opponents as well.

It was proved by psychologists opponents of the death penalty are afraid subconsciously to be on the place of the sentenced «accidentally». Opponents of euthanasia among their motifs also define fear of their own death and identification themselves with «victims» who «don't want to die» [3, c. 83-84]. In such cases death of the other

is perceived as possibility of their own one of the same kind.

There are some other means that help people to overcome fear of death, such as their interaction with «death» – funeral rites of their deceased relatives. Even in primitive beliefs where there were no strict division into this world and hereafter death was regarded as the transition from one life to another, and people organized that transition for their deceased relatives.

In psychology a person's sadness for the dead is mainly an expression of self-pity because of loss of some values. Burial rite alongside with archaic motif of the deceased's «transition» is also aimed at «removing» fear of death by means of ancient ritual of «coaxing» it [3, c. 85].

One more answer to death challenge is a new brunch of science formation – immortality. It grows out of religious idealistic immortalism. Longing for immortality is the idea that appeared in religion and then transferred to philosophy, Russian philosophy of cosmism for instance [11]. Russian philosopher of the XIX century N. Fedorov gives theoretic background to necessity of immortality for a person. For N. Fedorov the main problem of religion is revival [11, p. 42]. He considered a person to be a mind owner and that is why people can resist destruction and death of the Universe.

Immortality has become a part of scientific knowledge since 1985 when immortal organisms of the simplest were experimentally obtained [12]. Russian philosopher I. Vishev in his works tried to give theoretical background to real achievement of personal immortality. It was him who offered notions «immortality» and «homo immortalis» into scientific literature.

Ontological problems arise in human consciousness perhaps simultaneously to the very consciousness formation. Increased attention to problem of death can be explained by human nature. As biological and social creature a human is subject to the laws of nature. At the same time consciousness is a necessary precondition to human attempts to transcend. Epistemological component is a compound part of eschatology as profits first of all are attempts to look beyond the present into unknown mysterious future which is characteristic of not only religion but also science.

Religious and philosophical heritage pays much attention to problems outlined in the article development. Processes which are taking place in the modern world and have global character contribute to its further progress and bring to life multiple ideas formation such as eschatological concepts of human life ending, Earth and human race doomsday, eschatomania and eschatophobia as new attempts to minimize the tragedy of awareness of all that. In eschatological concerts the eternal human desire to overcome the problem of death and become involved in infinity is implemented.

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ТАҒДЫРЛЫ ТАРИХТЫҢ КУӘСІНА АЙНАЛҒАН ӘНДЕР

Мақалада Моңғолия мен Қытай Халық Республикасын мекен етіп жатқан қазақтардың арасында кеңінен таралған әндердің шығу тарихы зерттеліп, зерделенеді. Ән мәтініндегі халық тағдыры мен тарихына қатысты тұстары қаралып, мысалдар негізінде дәлелденіп, ғылыми тұрғыдан тұжырымдалды.

Түйін сөз: ән, тарих, тағдыр, өлең, халық, қазақ, көш.

ПЕСНИ, КОТОРЫЕ СВИДЕТЕЛЬСТВУЮТ О СУДЬБОНОСНОЙ ИСТОРИИ

В статье осмыслены и исследованы истории песен, которые широко распространены в диаспоре казахов, живущих в Китайской Народной Республике и в Монголии. В текстах песен рассмотрена судьба и история народа и сделан вывод на основании примеров, сформулированных в научной форме.

Ключевые: песня, история, судьба, стихи, народ, казах, кочевая жизнь.